

## Message Text

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51

ACTION NEA-10

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INR-07 NSAE-00 /044 W

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R 291100Z JULY 75

FM AMCONSUL LAHORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0523

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL KARACHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAHORE 0875

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PK

SUBJECT: DELAY IN FORMING PUNJAB CABINET REFLECTS FACTIONALISM

REFS: A. LAHORE 812

B. LAHORE 831

1. SINCE SADIQ QURESHI REPLACED HANEEF RAMAY AS PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER JULY 15, WE HAVE HELD OFF REPORTING SPECULATION OVER NEW CABINET, OR CHANGE IN GOVERNORSHIP, ON GROUND OUTCOME WOULD APPEAR SOON ENOUGH. PREOCCUPATION OF CHIEF MINISTER AND PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO WITH FLOOD RECONNAISSANCE AND RELIEF HAS APPARENTLY DELAYED PROCESS -- ALTHOUGH THEIR RECENT MEETINGS HAVE ALLOWED CONSULTATION ON POLITICS AS WELL. FOLLOWING SUMMARIZES SITUATION.

2. WITH "SECOND WAVE" OF FLOODS ENDING, FORMATION OF PROVINCIAL CABINET APPEARS IMMINENT. QUESTIONED BY NEWSMEN AT MULTAN JULY 27, CHIEF MINISTER ASSERTED CABINET WOULD BE FORMED "SOON AFTER FLOODS ARE OVER." SAME DAY AT MULTAN BEFORE RETURNING TO ISLAMABAD, PRIMIN SAID QURESHI WOULD INFORM PRESS SOON. MEANWHILE, PUBLIC AND VERNACULAR PRESS HAVE BEEN SPECULATING WIDELY ON COMPOSITION OF FUTURE CABINET, THOUGH SUBJECT IGNORED BY ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPERS. BURDEN IS THAT NEW GOVERNMENT WILL INCLUDE SOME OF THE MORE LIVE WOOD FROM RAMAY CABINET -- NOTABLY DR. ABDUL KHALIQ (AS SENIOR MINISTER),

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BRIGADIER SAHIBDAD, NAWAB KHAKWANI, AND POSSIBLY NASRULLAH DARISHAK AND AFZAL WATTOO -- PLUS SOME NEW FACES TO PLACATE SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS SUCH AS RECENTLY DOWNGRADED SOCIALISTS. LATTER COULD INCLUDE ABDUL HAFEEZ KARDAR, SOCIALISTIC ECONOMIST AND FORMER PUNJAB MINISTER; AND MEEIK ABDUL QAYYUM, JHELMUM SOCIALIST AND PROTEGE OF SHEIKH RASHID.

3. AS CHIEF MINISTER QURESHI EXPLAINED DURING MY CALL JULY 21, HE HAS BEEN GOVERNING "THROUGH BUREAUCRACY" WITHOUT MINISTERS SINCE JULY 15 AND ACUTELY FEELS NEED OF MINISTERIAL SUPPORT, ESPECIALLY DURING FLOODS. GOVERNOR HAS TAKEN ON FOUR OSDS (OFFICERS ON SPECIAL DUTY) TO ASSIST. NAWA-I-WAQT EDITORIAL JULY 29 TAKES GOVERNOR TO TASK FOR DELAY IN FORMING CABINET WHICH IT ATTRIBUTES TO CONTINUING FACTIONAL STRUGGLE WITHIN PUNJAB PPP.

4. AT SAME TIME, MUSTAFA KHAR APPEARS TO BE IN LAST DAYS AS GOVERNOR -- AT LEAST THIS TERM. HE HAS CONFIDED TO US THAT HIS RESIGNATION BECOMES EFFECTIVE JULY 31, AND PRESS HAS BEEN CHEWING ON STORY OF BHUTTO'S LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE. NAWA-I-SAQT JULY 25 REPORTED MEETING AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE LAHORE AT WHICH BHUTTO, KHAR, CENTRAL MINISTER PIRZADA AND SENATOR RAMAY CONSIDERED "KHAR'S POLITICAL FUTURE," ALLEGEDLY DECIDING TO AWARD HIM PPP TICKET FOR ELECTION TO PUNJAB ASSEMBLY FROM LAHORE SEAT VACATED BY RAMAY. COMMENT: ILLOGICAL THOUGH THIS SEEMS, CONSIDERING TROUBLE KHAR HAS CAUSED LATELY, IT COULD BE VIEWED AS MEANS OF KEEPING HIM IN THE OPEN AND AN EYE ON HIS MANEUVERING.

5. GUESSING OVER KHAR'S SUCCESSOR RANGES WIDE BUT TRENDS TOWARD "NON-POLITICAL PERSONALITY" WILLING TO PERFORM LIMITED CONSTITUTIONAL FUNCTIONS WITHOUT CHALLENGING CHIEF MINISTER'S POLITICAL SUPREMACY, AS IN OTHER PROVINCES. NAMES MOST FREQUENTLY BRUIED ARE BRIGADIER MOHAMMAD ABBAS ABBASI, FORMER AMIR OF BAHAWALPUR (TO COUNTERACT BAHAWALPURI PROVINCIAL SEPARATISM); RETIRED PUNJAB CHIEF SECRETARY AFZAL AGHA; AIR MARSHAL NUR KHAN, PIA CHIEF; AND RETIRED LT. GEN. BAKHTIAR RANA. CENTRAL FINANCE MINISTER HANIF; HAYAT MUHAMMAD TUMMAN, POLITICAL ADVISER TO PRIME MINISTER; AND ESTABLISHMENT SECRETARY VAQAR AHMAD ALSO MENTIONED. SOME VERNACULARS CLAIM ABBASI HAS BEEN OFFERED JOB AND IS CONSIDERING.

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6. COMMENT: WHATEVER THE OUTCOME, SEEMS CLEAR THAT CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE PROVOKED BY KHAR HAS BEEN RESOLVED IN FAVOR OF SUPREMACY OF CHIEF MINISTER, BUT THAT RIGHT-LEFT AND PERSONAL FACTIONALISM CONTINUE TO PLAGUE PUNJAB PPP, CAUSING PROBLEMS IN CABINET FORMATION. QURESHI -- STAUNCH BHUTTO LOYALIST, MIDDLE-ROADER AND OUTSPOKEN FOE OF "GROUPISM" -- HANDPICKED TO REUNITE

THE PARTY, CONTINUES TO BE HARD PRESSED.  
SPENGLER

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NNN

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